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*'Russians could start trouble on our borders'*

## Mexico is Soviet 'objective'

By Ted Knop  
Scripps-Howard News Service

WASHINGTON — The Soviet Union's "primary objective" in Central America is to get a foothold in Mexico, forcing the United States to commit military forces to the U.S.-Mexico border, says Sen. Henry Jackson, D-Wash.

Jackson, a longtime Kremlinologist, said that Soviet-supplied leftist forces in Nicaragua and El Salvador are part of a "step-by-step" strategy aimed at Mexico.

"If they're able to establish a Castro-like government in Mexico, the Russians could start all kinds of trouble on our border," Jackson said.

He described Central America and Mexico as "ripe for revolution" because of poverty, disease and government corruption.

Jackson's belief that the Soviets have designs on Mexico is shared by a number of people in the State Department and White House, but is not the prevailing view.

Frank Crigler, director of the State Department's Mexican affairs office, said he has seen "no evidence of Soviet subversive inroads" in Mexico or imminent revolution. "To the contrary, I see evidence of remarkable economic growth in Mexico, and good prospects for further growth," Crigler said.

Secretary of State Alexander Haig has spoken of Soviet

communist subversion in Central America as a "cancerous growth," but has not said it threatens Mexico specifically. Mexico recently sent troops to its southern borders to guard against leftist guerrilla incursions through Guatemala.

Jackson, a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said the largest contingent of Soviet KGB spies in Latin America is in Mexico City.

"If they can create instability in Mexico," he said, "it would force us to deploy large forces along the border."

While the Soviets have had to commit large forces to their borders, the United States has not had to provide military defenses along its borders with Mexico or Cana-

da. Committing a large force to either border could hamper U.S. military readiness around the world, or increase defense costs substantially.

While endorsing the administration policy of providing military aid to Central American governments fighting leftist guerrillas, Jackson said the United States must also show itself to be on the side of "social justice."

The United States faces "terribly unpleasant" prospects in Central America because it is aligned with "feudalistic" regimes that are not supported by the people, while revolutionaries exploit the widespread poverty.

"I don't know of any majority in any of those countries that espouses the kind of democracy we have," the senator observed.